

## Robin Ann Radlein - Hydrologist in Charge, APRFC



National Weather Service  
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### Overview of your job:

I am the Hydrologist-in-Charge of the National Weather Service Alaska-Pacific River Forecast Center. This is part of the National Weather Service that works to understand and forecast the land side of the hydrologic cycle. We study and measure precipitation and temperatures, understand how these interact with ground conditions such as soil type, vegetation, soil moisture, and topography to influence conditions in rivers and lakes. We examine river channels, structures, and stream flow. We create and use mathematical or physical models to forecast future river conditions based on current conditions and weather forecasts. We issue river forecasts and flood warnings, and work with other government agencies and the media to make sure that the warnings reach the people that need them.

Educational Background or Degree: B.S. Meteorology, Texas A&M University; M.S. Meteorology, minor in hydrology, Texas A&M University; additional graduate work in Civil Engineering-Hydrology, Georgia Institute of Technology

High school course work you would recommend to students: English – the best ideas do little good if you can't communicate them; mathematics – this is the language of most physical science; physics and chemistry, ecology, oceanography, geology, or biology – all of the sciences have some connections; computer science – modern science and education are very computerized, so learn to use your tools; classes you enjoy- spend time learning the things you like or that will round out the person you are becoming.

Is there a person or event that influenced you in choosing this career? My eighth grade science teacher, Mr. Story, was a meteorologist. His assignments in science were always more fun to me, so I put more effort into them. When we came to the assignment on weather- keeping a weather log, studying the weather reports and maps and making our own forecasts – I decided that was what I wanted to do. In high school I took as many math and science classes as I could and it confirmed for me that I really loved the challenges of exploring and understanding how the world worked. In college, I discovered I really liked the aspect of meteorology that dealt with flooding and the role of water in the weather and climate, so I became a hydrometeorologist.

Are there positive or negative things that have shaped your personal and/or career choices? Most of my influences have been very positive ones. My parents had always told me I could accomplish any goal I set for myself. I had caring and challenging teachers throughout school and I really enjoyed learning new things. I attended an excellent university with some very competitive classmates. Thirty years ago most sciences were still considered more of a man's job, but my teachers and classmates never discouraged me from the course I had chosen. After I graduated and started working I found that many of my colleagues were willing to help me continue learning and trying new things as long as I was willing to keep working hard to learn. It led me to several exciting and satisfying jobs.

Do you have any advice for students? Try to find a job that you enjoy. It can be something that you find challenging and that makes you keep stretching yourself. It can be something you find satisfying, like helping other people. Don't be afraid to try something new, but never short-change the job you have while you look for one you like better. Learn everything you can from every job you do, and always do your best.

May students contact you after the conference? Yes